

## General Information

The Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) tournament monitoring program consists of two distinct components. These are: 1) registration, and 2) reporting. Registration is required to annually identify all active HMS tournaments. Tournament reporting provides specific information that may be used in stock assessment programs.

A **tournament** is defined as “any fishing competition involving Atlantic HMS in which participants must register or otherwise enter, or in which a prize or award is offered for catching or landing such fish.”

A **tournament operator** means a person or entity responsible for maintaining records of participants and results for tournaments conducted from a port in an Atlantic coastal state, including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, regardless of whether fish are retained.

## Tournament Registration

### How do I know if I need to register my tournament with NMFS?

All tournament operators must notify the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the purpose, dates, and location of any fishing tournament involving highly migratory species **at least four weeks prior** to commencement of the tournament.

HMS include:

- Atlantic Billfish (blue & white marlin, sailfish)
- Tunas (bluefin, yellowfin, skipjack, albacore, bigeye)
- Sharks (large and small coastals, pelagics)
- Swordfish

### How do I register my tournament?

Please call the Southeast Regional Office, HMS Division at (727) 824-5399 to obtain a registration form, or download it at: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/tournament.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/tournament.htm) or by clicking on “Tournaments” at [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com).

HMS Tournament operators must submit the completed registration form to the address indicated on the form or FAX it to (727) 824-5398 **at least four weeks prior** to the commencement of the tournament.

### What information do I need to supply when registering a HMS tournament?

Information requested on the registration form includes:

- Tournament name
- Location (city and state)
- Date of tournament
- Operator name and contact information
- All HMS for which points or prizes are awarded

Please include a copy of the tournament brochure and tournament rules with your registration form, if they are available.

## Tournament Participation

HMS tournament participants must possess either an HMS Angling, HMS Charter/headboat, or Atlantic Tunas General category permit. Atlantic Tunas General category permit holders are prohibited from fishing under HMS Angling category regulations except when participating in a registered HMS tournament. When fishing in a registered HMS tournament, Atlantic Tunas General category permit holders must comply with HMS angling category regulations for swordfish, sharks and billfish, and General category regulations for Atlantic tunas.

## Tournament Reporting

### How will I know if my tournament has been selected for reporting?

NMFS will notify HMS tournament operators in writing if a tournament has been selected for reporting. If a tournament is selected, a reporting form will be sent to the operator. The reporting form must be returned to NMFS within 7 days after tournament fishing has been completed.

### What tournament information must be reported to NMFS?

Selected tournament operators must maintain, and submit, a record of catch and effort on the forms provided by NMFS. In addition, billfish tournament operators must submit radio logs or catch certificates containing capture information including:

fishing hours, name of all boats fishing that day, bait types, fight times for all billfish captured or released, and weight, length and sex of each fish brought ashore.

**Where do I send the completed tournament reporting forms?**

Tournament operators must submit the completed forms and a copy of the tournament rules to NMFS at the address indicated on the reporting form, postmarked no later than seven days after the conclusion of the tournament.

**Why are tournament registration and reporting necessary?**

Tournament registration and reporting is a critical component of the HMS monitoring program. The collected information is used to estimate tournament fishing effort and landings of HMS for stock assessments, national and international reports and other monitoring efforts.

***NEED MORE INFORMATION?***

**[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/)**  
**[www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com)**

1-727-824-5399 (Southeast HMS Office)  
1-301-713-2347 (HMS Headquarters)  
1-888-872-8862 (HMS Permits)

**National Marine Fisheries Service**  
Highly Migratory Species Management Division  
1315 East-West Highway  
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# Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Tournament Registration and Reporting



## National Marine Fisheries Service

Office of Sustainable Fisheries  
Highly Migratory Species Management Division

This pamphlet provides a summary of HMS tournament registration and reporting requirements, as of February 2005. For the complete and official set of regulations, see 50 CFR part 635 and the Federal Register, or call the Highly Migratory Species Management Division at 301-713-2347. Since fishery rules are subject to change, fishermen must familiarize themselves with the latest complete regulations and are responsible for complying with current official regulations. If there is a discrepancy between the regulations in 50 CFR part 635 and this brochure, the regulations will take precedence. This brochure is produced in compliance with Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act.

